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S E C R E T ROME 003739

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: PSI: ITALY SETS INTERAGENCY REVIEW MEETING

REF: STATE 231890

CLASSIFIED BY: ACTING POLITICAL MINISTER-COUNSELOR GARY ROBBINS FOR REASONS 1.5(B)(D)

1. (C) THE MFA WILL CHAIR AN INTERAGENCY MEETING AT THE END OF AUGUST TO REVIEW THE PROLIFERATION SECURITY INITIATIVE GENERALLY AND REFTEL DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES IN PARTICULAR, ACCORDING TO FILIPPO FORMICA, DIRECTOR OF THE MFA DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL OFFICE.

2. (S) FORMICA COMMENTED THAT THE CURRENT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES APPEARS MORE TARGETED AND STREAMLINED THAN THE LAST VERSION. HE AGREED THAT THERE IS VALUE IN MAKING THE INTERDICTION PRINCIPLES PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE INITIATIVE IS RECEIVING PRESS COVERAGE. ITALY SUPPORTS OUTREACH ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE TO ENCOURAGE STRATEGIC COUNTRIES TO COOPERATE, HE SAID. HOWEVER, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO COORDINATE CAREFULLY WHICH COUNTRIES TO INCLUDE, HOW, AND FOR WHAT ACTIVITIES.

3. (C) FORMICA NOTED THAT A BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT MAY BE NEEDED TO AUTHORIZE BOARDING OF ITALIAN VESSELS BY OTHER COUNTRIES, AS PROPOSED IN 4.C OF THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES. WHERE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUES ARE INVOLVED, WE NEED TO STAY WITHIN EXISTING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LAW, HE SAID, ADDING THAT HE HAD SUBMITTED COMMENTS TO THIS EFFECT AT THE BRISBANE MEETING. FORMICA ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO USE AN ISSUE ON THE UN FIRST COMMITTEE'S AGENDA TO BOLSTER THE PSI. HE PROPOSED, AS AN EXAMPLE, INTEGRATING THE CONCEPT OF WMD INTERDICTION INTO EXISTING INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION WHICH CURRENTLY DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS WMD.

4. (C) FORMICA ENCOURAGED THE USG TO CONSIDER ADDING THE EU AS A PSI PARTICIPANT. ITALY, IN ITS CAPACITY AS EU PRESIDENT, PLANS TO DISCUSS THE PSI WITH OTHER EU MEMBERS AT THE SEPTEMBER 4 EU CONOPS MEETING BECAUSE SOME ISSUES, SUCH AS DUAL USE AND TRADE, FALL WITHIN THE DOMAIN OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, FORMICA SAID. MORE INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN REGULATIONS GOVERNING THESE ISSUES COULD BE USEFUL IN DEVELOPING THE PSI, HE SAID. THE EC ALREADY HAS SANCTIONED A FEW MEMBER STATES FOR REACHING BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH THE US ON CUSTOMS REGULATIONS THAT ARE WITHIN THE EC'S EXCLUSIVE COMPETENCY, HE SAID. HE SUGGESTED INCLUDING IN THE ITALIAN DELEGATION AN EC REPRESENTATIVE WHO COULD DISCUSS EC DUAL USE AND TRADE REGULATIONS. FORMICA STRESSED THAT ITALY WILL COORDINATE WITH THE USG ON HOW BEST TO ADDRESS EU AND EC INTEGRATION.

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